Chilean Baby Dies After Seperation Surgery

(AP) — A 10-month-old girl who was surgically separated from her conjoined twin died Sunday after suffering general organ failure, said the director of a Chilean children's hospital. Doctors at Luis Calvo Mackenna Hospital had separated Maria Jose Paredes Navarrete from her twin sister Maria Paz late Tuesday at the thorax, abdomen and pelvis in a marathon, 20-hour surgery. Maria Jose ran into cardiac problems that required her to be revived three times afterward, and Maria Paz remains clinging to life, said hospital director Osvaldo Artaza.
A hospital statement said Maria Jose had suffered "a flaw in the right side of the heart as a consequence of pulmonary hypertension that afflicted her since her birth." The statement said Maria Paz was in a stable condition, with her kidneys starting to function. Chileans have closely followed news about the twin girls, with updates about their condition making online and newspaper headlines.

Artaza said the surgery affected all of the deceased girl's organs, while "recognizing the delicate state of Maria Paz, we are hopeful." "We are conscious that we made every effort," Artaza said. "It's a moment of deep pain, of deep grieving."

The twins were born in the town of Loncoche, about 470 miles south of the capital of Santiago, and had spent their entire lives under hospital care. They underwent seven surgeries before Tuesday's procedure, in which 25 surgeons and anesthesiologists participated.

According to the University of Maryland Medical Center, about 35 percent of conjoined twins survive only one day, while the overall survival rate runs between 5 and 25 percent.

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